

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 L-02 CIAE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5136

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PASS DOT FOR UNDER SECRETARY BARNUM AND DR. TRILLING

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EWWT, CA

SUBJ: GREAT LAKES PILOTAGE QUESTION

REF: OTTAWA 3916

1. EMBASSY HAS ATTEMPTED TO GET INDEPENDENT READINGS ON THE DEGREE OF SOLIDARITY BETWEEN THE CANADIAN GREAT LAKES PILOTS AND THE SEAWAY EMPLOYEES AS SUGGESTED BY O'NEIL AND REPORTED PARA 4 OF REFTEL.

2. PHILIP HURCOMB, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DOMINION MARINE ASSOC., ADVISED TCO HIS INFORMATION IS THAT SOME SOLIDARITY EXISTS AND THAT, IN THE EVENT US PILOTS ATTEMPTED TO WORK THE WELLAND CANAL WHILE THE CANADIAN PILOTS WERE ON STRIKE, NATIONALIST CONSIDERATIONS ALONE WOULD PROVOKE SYMPATHETIC ACTION TO CLOSE THE WELLAND. HOWEVER, HE DEFERRED TO JACK CRICHTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SHIPPING FEDERATION OF CANADA, AS BETTER INFORMED IN THIS AREA AND WITH WHOM WE ALSO DISCUSSED THE MATTER.

3. CRICHTON ALSO ASSERTED THIS SOLIDARITY EXISTED BUT WAS NOT CLEAR AS TO THE ORGANIZATIONAL TIES, IF ANY, WHICH
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UNDERLIE IT. HE ALSO ASSIGNED A HIGH VALUE TO THE NATIONALIST APPEAL. CRICHTON WAS MORE CONCERNED ABOUT

SOLIDARITY BETWEEN THE GREAT LAKES PILOTS AND THE LAURENTIAN PILOTS (ASSOCIATED IN THE FEDERATION OF CANADIAN PILOTS ORGANIZATIONS) WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS VERY REAL. IN HIS VIEW, ANY JOB ACTION BY THE GREAT LAKES PILOTS, WOULD TRIGGER A SYMPATHETIC REACTION WHICH WOULD CLOSE THE ST. LAWRENCE FROM MONTREAL EAST. HE SUGGESTED THAT ALMOST HAPPENED LAST SEPTEMBER.

4. JAMES LEVIA (EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE CANADIAN BROTHERHOOD OF RAILWAY, TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS), WHO NEGOTIATES ON BEHALF OF SEAWAY WORKERS, SHARES THE VIEW THAT SYMPATHETIC ACTION BY THE SEAWAY EMPLOYEES IS LIKELY IF THE PILOTS GO ON STRIKE AND PUT UP A PICKET LINE. THIS WOULD CLOSE THE WELLAND CANAL. IN SUPPORT OF HIS POSITION LEVIA CITED THE PROVISION IN THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNION AND THE ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY AUTHORITY WHICH ASSURES THAT SEAWAY WORKERS WILL NOT BE "SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINE OR DISCHARGE FOR FAILING TO CROSS ANY PICKET LINE WHERE THERE IS DANGER OF BODILY HARM." HE NOTED THE KEY WORD "ANY" IN THAT CLAUSE WHICH MEANS NO DISTINCTION IS MADE BETWEEN LEGAL AND ILLEGAL PICKET LINES, OR BETWEEN THOSE PUT UP BY UNIONS AFFILIATED WITH THE CANADIAN LABOR CONGRESS AND THOSE NOT SO AFFILIATED (IN WHICH CATEGORY IS THE CORPORATION OF GREAT LAKES PILOTS). HIS MEMBERS, HE SUGGESTED, ARE SENSITIVE TO ALL PICKET LINES AND FEAR THE PROSPECTS OF VIOLENCE RESULTING IN BODILY HARM. CONSEQUENTLY, HE WOULD EXPECT THAT THE WEALLAND WOULD BECOME INOPERATIVE ONCE THE PILOTS UNDERTOOK JOB ACTION AND PUT UP A PICKET LINE THERE. IF THEY ALSO PUT UP A LINE AT A POINT ON THE MONTREAL-LAKE ONTARIO SECTOR IT WOULD ALSO BECOME INOPERATIVE.

5. COMMENT: THIS INFORMATION APPEARS TO CONFIRM VALIDITY OF POINT MADE BY O'NEIL RE POSSIBILITY OF FRATERNAL ACTION TO CLOSE WELLAND AND ST. LAWRENCE AND SUGGESTS THAT USG WILL BE UNABLE TO ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVE (I.E., CREATING SITUATIONS WHERE JOB ACTION BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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CANADIAN PILOTS CANNOT FRUSTRATE U.S. FOREIGN COMMERCE) WITHOUT AGREEMENT WHICH CANADIAN PILOTS - AS DISTINCT FROM GOC -- FIND ACCEPTABLE. JOHNSON

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